



# Evaluation of tendency towards academic dishonesty levels of psychological counseling and guidance undergraduate students

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## Abstract

This aim of this study is to investigate tendency towards academic dishonesty levels of undergraduate students. The sample consisted of 303 undergraduate students attending to psychological counseling and guidance department. In this study, “Tendency towards Academic Dishonesty Scale was used as data collection tools. Results indicated that no significant differences were found in tendency towards academic dishonesty levels of students in terms of gender, class level, and father education level. On the other hand, significant differences were found in tendency towards academic dishonesty levels of students in terms of mother education level and perceived academic level. Scheffe test was carried out in order to determine among which groups significant differences existed. According to Scheffe test results, academic dishonesty levels of students whose mother education level is graduate was found to be higher than the academic dishonesty levels of students whose mother education levels were illiterate, literate and high school. However, no significant difference was found according to Scheffe test results in perceived academic achievement.

*Keywords:* Psychological Counseling and Guidance Department, Academic Dishonesty

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## 1. Introduction

According to Ikupa (1997), academic dishonesty is defined as “illegal and unethical behaviours that individual displays during testing of his/her knowledge and ability. Academic tendency includes individual’s behaviours such as cheating, changing exam papers, stealing exam papers from examination hall, changing results of the exam, showing physical or verbal aggressive behaviours to people applying the exam and behaving as a different person in the manner of breaking out the rules of exam. (cited. Aluede, Omoregie and Osa-Edoh, 2006). According to Whitley (1998), academic dishonesty nowadays exists frequently especially in universities and thus constitutes a big problem. In the study of Burkey (1997), 86 % of the participants have suspected, and 65% of them have been certain of academic dishonesty in their classroom.

Cheating is a kind of academic dishonesty. However, cheating and academic dishonesty mostly are used in the same meaning in universities and in other education institutions and therefore students could not distinguish the difference between these two concepts. Thus, universities and other education institutions need to clarify the definition of cheating and academic dishonesty. Otherwise, there is a risk as students make their own definitions (Carpenter et al., 2006:181).

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According to Pavela (1978), appropriation is defined as “individual’s adaptation and reproduction of ideas, words and statements belonging to someone else without mentioning reference as if they were his/her own ideas, words and statements (cited. Aluede, Omoregie and Osa-Edoh, 2006); whereas cheating is only a kind of academic dishonesty (cited. Carpenter et al. 2006:181).

## 2. Method

As the study aimed to explore the existence and/or degree of relationship between two or more variables, the study adopted the relational survey model (Karasar, 2003).

### 2.1. Study Group

Participants were 303 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year students from the Department of Counseling and Guidance.

### 2.2. Data Collection Tools

In this study the “Tendency towards Academic Dishonesty Scale” which was developed and tested for validity and reliability by Eminoğlu (2008) was used. This scale is also a five-point Likert type instrument with 22 items. The statements are scored as follows: Definitely agree 5 points, Agree 4 points, Undecided 3 points, Disagree 2 points, Definitely disagree 1 point. The maximum possible score that may be obtained from the scale is 110, and minimum score 22. The first factor of the scale is named as “tendency towards cheating”, the second factor “tendency towards dishonesty in work such as home assignment or projects – general”, the third factor “tendency towards dishonesty in research and reporting process” and fourth factor “tendency towards dishonesty in references” (Eminoglu, 2008). The independent t-test was used in order to determine the differences in tendency towards academic dishonesty levels between male and female students. In addition to this, ANOVA was used to determine the differences among perceived academic achievement, class level, graduated high school, mother education level and father education level.

## 3. Findings and Comments

### 3.1. Findings about the first sub-problem

The first sub-problem of the study was: “Do students’ tendency towards academic dishonesty vary by gender? Results pertaining to this sub-problem are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics Results of the Tendency towards Academic Dishonesty Scale and t-test by gender

	Gender	N	Mean	sd	t	df	p
Tendency towards Academic Dishonesty Scale	Girls	208	3,1287	0,26612	0,117	301	0,907
	Boys	95	3,1239	0,35522			

As seen in Table 1, no significant difference existed between male and female students’ tendency for academic dishonesty levels.

### 3.2. Findings about the second sub-problem

The second sub-problem of the study was: “Do students’ tendency towards academic dishonesty vary by year of study?” and the results are displayed in table 2.

Table 2. One-way ANOVA Results of the Tendency towards Academic Dishonesty Scale by Year of Study

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean of Squares	F	p
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Tendency towards Academic Dishonesty Scale	Between groups	0,128	3	0,043	0,482	0,695
	Within groups	26,394	299	0,088		
	Total					
		26,522	302			

Table 2 shows that no significant difference existed between students' academic dishonesty levels with respect to their year of study [  $p < 0,05$  ].

### 3.3. Findings about the third sub-problem

The third sub-problem of the study was: "Do students' tendency towards academic dishonesty vary by mother education level? The results are indicated in Table 3.

Table 3. One-way ANOVA Results of the Tendency towards Academic Dishonesty Scale by Mother Education

	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean of Squares	F	P
Tendency towards Academic Dishonesty Scale	Between groups	1,708	6	0,285	3,395	0,003*
	Within groups	24,815	296	0,084		
	Total	26,522	302			

As seen in Table 3, significant difference was found in academic dishonesty levels of students in terms of mother education level. [  $(F(6,296)=0,285, p < 0,05)$  ]. Table 4 present the results of the Scheffe test conducted to identify the significant difference.

Table 4. Scheffe test Results of the Tendency towards Academic Dishonesty Scale by Educational Level of Father of the students

	(I) Mother Education Level	(J) Mother Education Level	Mean of Difference (I-J)	Standard Error	P
Tendency towards Academic Dishonesty Scale	Illiterate	Literate	0,04520	0,06873	0,999
		Primary School	-0,06905	0,05468	0,952
		Secondary School	-0,08433	0,07270	0,969
		High School	-0,06921	0,07141	0,988
		Collage	0,01755	0,07270	1,000
		Graduate	-0,78182*	0,21050	0,035
	Literate	Illiterate	-0,04520	0,06873	0,999
		Primary School	-0,11425	0,05407	0,614
		Secondary School	-0,12953	0,07225	0,781
		High School	-0,11441	0,07094	0,856
		Collage	-0,02765	0,07225	1,000
		Graduate	-0,82702*	0,21035	0,019
	Primary School	Illiterate	0,06905	0,05468	0,952
		Literate	0,11425	0,05407	0,614
		Secondary School	-0,01527	0,05904	1,000
		High School	-0,00016	0,05744	1,000
		Collage	0,08661	0,05904	0,905
		Graduate	-0,71277	0,20618	0,067

Secondary School	Illiterate	0,08433	0,07270	0,969
	Literate	0,12953	0,07225	0,781
High School	Primary School	0,01527	0,05904	1,000
	High School	0,01512	0,07480	1,000
	Collage	0,10188	0,07604	0,937
	Graduate	-0,69749	0,21168	0,097
Collage	Illiterate	0,06921	0,07141	0,988
	Literate	0,11441	0,07094	0,856
	Primary School	0,00016	0,05744	1,000
	Secondary School	-0,01512	0,07480	1,000
Graduate	Collage	0,08676	0,07480	0,969
	Graduate	-0,71261	0,21124	0,081
	Illiterate	-0,01755	0,07270	1,000
	Literate	0,02765	0,07225	1,000
Collage	Primary School	-0,08661	0,05904	0,905
	Secondary School	-0,10188	0,07604	0,937
	High School	-0,08676	0,07480	0,969
	Graduate	-0,79937*	0,21168	0,029
Graduate	Illiterate	0,78182*	0,21050	0,035
	Literate	0,82702*	0,21035	0,019
	Primary School	0,71277	0,20618	0,067
	Secondary School	0,69749	0,21168	0,097
Collage	High School	0,71261	0,21124	0,081
	Collage	0,79937*	0,21168	0,029

Table 4 shows that, academic dishonesty levels of students whose mother education level is graduate was found to be higher than the academic dishonesty levels of students whose mother education levels were illiterate, literate and high school.

### 3.4. Findings about the fourth sub-problem

The fourth sub-problem of the study was: “Do students’ tendency towards academic dishonesty vary by father education level?”

Table 5. One-way ANOVA Results of the Tendency towards Academic Dishonesty Scale by Father Education Level

	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean of Squares	F	p
Tendency towards Academic Dishonesty Scale	Between groups	0,662	6	0,110	1,263	0,275
	Within groups	25,860	296	0,187		
	Total	26,522	302			

Table 5 shows that no significant difference was found in tendency for academic dishonesty levels of students in terms of father education level.  $[F(6,296)=0,110, p<0,05]$ .

### 3.5. Findings about the fifth sub-problem

The fifth sub-problem of the study was: “Do students’ tendency towards academic dishonesty vary by perceived academic achievement?” and the results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. One-way ANOVA Results for the Tendency towards Academic Dishonesty Scale by Perceived Academic Achievement

	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean of Squares	F	p
Tendency towards Academic Dishonesty Scale	Between groups	0,693	3	0,231	2,675	0,047*
	Within groups	25,829	299	0,086		
	Total	26,522	302			

According to Table 6, a significant difference existed between students’ tendency for academic dishonesty with perceived academic achievement [ $F(3,299)=0,231$ ,  $p<0,05$ ]. Table 7 presents the results of the Scheffe test conducted to identify the significant difference.

Table 7. Scheffe test Results of the Tendency towards Academic Dishonesty Scale by Perceived Academic Achievement of the Students

(I) Perceived Academic Achievement		(J) Perceived Academic Achievement	Standard Error		P
			Difference in means (I-J)		
Tendency towards Academic Dishonesty Scale	Unsuccessful	Moderately successful	-0,10242	0,10735	0,823
		Successful	-0,12796	0,10637	0,695
		Very Successful	-0,36301	0,14282	0,094
	Moderately successful	Unsuccessful	0,10242	0,10735	0,823
		Successful	-0,02554	0,03526	0,913
		Very successful	-0,26059	0,10161	0,089
	Successful	Unsuccessful	0,12796	0,10637	0,695
		Moderately Successful	0,02554	0,03526	0,913
		Very Successful	-0,23505	0,10058	0,143
	Very Successful	Unsuccessful	0,36301	0,14282	0,094
		Moderately successful	0,26059	0,10161	0,089
		Successful	0,23505	0,10058	0,143

According to Table 7, no significant difference was found in tendency for academic dishonesty levels of students according to perceived achievement levels. Scheffe test was carried out in order to determine the source of this difference. However, no significant difference was found according to Scheffe test results.


## Discussion

Academic dishonesty gradually increasing in recent years has become an important problem to be solved in universities and in other education institutions. Other studies have found that students who are cheating at school also make shoplifting (Beck and Ajzen, 1991) tax cheating (Fass, 1990), becoming involved with hazardous substances (Blankenship & Whitley, 2000; Kerkvliet, 1994), and cheating in graduation and professional life as well as displaying unacceptable work ethics (Baldwin et al., 1996).

Because students attending Psychological Counseling and Guidance Department in different universities will work as a guidance teacher in primary education and secondary education and have to be deal with these problems, determining tendency for academic dishonesty levels gradually gains more importance.

Results indicated that no significant difference was found according to gender. This result shows similarities with the results of the study carried out by Cengizhan ve Cengizhan (1999). Again no significant differences were found in tendency for academic dishonesty levels of students in terms of class level, father education level. Academic dishonesty levels of students whose mother education level is graduate was found to be higher than the academic dishonesty levels of students whose mother education levels were illiterate, literate and high school.

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